

special report:

THE HOFFA WARS

*an investigation of the violence and corruption
surrounding the missing teamster leader whose influence extended
to nearly every corner of american public life*

including

HOW JIMMY HOFFA BECAME INVOLVED WITH ORGANIZED CRIME
HOW MOB MONEY WAS FUNNELED TO RICHARD NIXON
HOFFA'S SECRET ROLE AS THE CIA'S LINK TO THE MOB
THE HATRED BETWEEN HOFFA AND THE KENNEDY BROTHERS
WHY HOFFA WAS KILLED AND WHO DID IT

article

By DAN E. MOLDEA

At presstime, the U.S. House Assassinations Committee was about to reveal some surprising details regarding the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Many of the same names that were to be discussed by the committee are also major characters in my book "The Hoffa Wars."

In October 1974, as a free-lance writer, I began investigating Jimmy Hoffa and the Teamsters. Ten months later, I was concentrating exclusively on the union's extortion schemes against trucking companies and terrorist activities against internal rank-and-file reform groups. Investigations of the Hoffa-Frank Fitzsimons power struggle and of Hoffa's disappearance were of only peripheral concern to me; and I had absolutely no inclination to investigate the alleged assassination plots against either Fidel Castro or John Kennedy. Ironically, however, my conclusions on labor terrorism, rebel movements and shakedowns led me into these areas, which I had, at one time, considered distant and unrelated.

After a brief stint as a Teamsters researcher with NBC, I continued my independent investigation. In the late 1975 and early 1976, I received \$2100 from the Hoffa Reward Fund,

of the Hoffa murder. Hoffa's son, attorney James P. Hoffa, Jr., who was the administrator of the fund, simply told me to do whatever I had to do, no matter how embarrassing to him, his family or his father's memory, in order to help uncover the truth about Hoffa's execution.

Meanwhile, I was hired part time by The Detroit Free Press. We worked for the next eight months on the extortion plots I had uncovered, during which time I severed my financial relationship with young Hoffa. Soon after, I began receiving a series of grants from the Fund for Investigative Journalism in Washington, D.C., which continued after my story was published. Simultaneously, I was doing some work on the same subject for columnist Jack Anderson. With the help of money and contacts supplied by the F.I.J. and Anderson, my investigations snowballed, forcing me into those areas that I had thought to be unrelated to my work.

I was not completely new to the Teamsters union and its problems when I started my work on "The Hoffa Wars". I had worked on a local union and had even driven a small truck while in college. On a hot summer day in 1971,

the cargo I was hauling exploded and I was nearly killed. Eight truckers pulled over and probably saved my life. "The Hoffa Wars" is part payment on my debt to those eight men and to the dissident rank-and-file Teamsters who kept me alive during my four-year investigation.

JIMMY HOFFA'S most valuable contribution to the American labor movement came at the moment he stopped breathing on July 30, 1975. The involuntary act occurred in the midst of his dramatic bid to recapture the general presidency of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, which he had lost during five years in prison. Still popular among reporters with short memories who insisted upon portraying him as a working-class hero, and among rank-and-file admirers who had forgiven him for stealing from them, Hoffa nevertheless had a slim chance of a comeback. His release from prison in late 1971 led to a futile four-year struggle for power; his execution opened the floodgates for investigations into the Teamsters and the underworld, their illicit enterprises, their influence on the Nixon White House and their role in assassination plots against a foreign